TAKAHASHI, JAPAN'S PREMIER, SEEN CLOSE AT HAND

Broadmindness, Perfect Poise, Jollity and Love of Literature Characteristics Remembered by His American Professor

AN unusual pen picture of Japan's new Premier, Baron Takahashi, is presented in the accompanying sketch. Much has been written of the recent years of his life, little of his earlier career. The writer knew Baron Takahashi as a youth and brings out in his sketch the strong literary bent and broadmindedness that finds little mention in the usual history of the new Premier. The latter quality is stressed particularly and is illuminating as to the character of the man.

By WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS,
Formerly of the Imperial University.

MY best knowledge of Baron Takahashi, the new Premier of Japan, comes from our mutual love of Japanese literature. Happily, a classmate in Rutgers College, son of the American envoy who followed Townsend Harris, opened first for me the jewelled gates of Japanese folk lore and fairy tales. Then further entrance into the enchanted land in the Orient was aided by the Japanese students who, in 1866, flocked to the college at New Brunswick; but best of all, on the soil of Japan, was Takahashi, the present Premier of "The Land Between Heaven and Earth"—as the ancient poets call Everlasting Great Japan.

The merry boy was 17 years old when I first met him in Tokio in January, 1871. I had come to teach science, chemistry and physics; but the native books and their makers charmed me most. It was both delight and surprise to meet a well favored Japanese lad with a mental apparatus that seemed ever alert and with a patient disposition and a temper of perpetual sweetness. He had a wonderful grasp of the English language in both its insular and its American forms. This made offhand translation from his own vernacular into our tongue prompt, fluent and accurate. It made listening easy.

Within two days after reaching the capital I went to the book shops and bought what I knew was the literature worth knowing about and then began with Takahashi to learn what was inside the covers.

Could Talk Live English, Not the Phrase Book Kind

It was such a delight to find a young student full of life, with grit, charm and decided literary appreciation, who could read and talk live English and not the canned stuff of Ollendorf or the dry bones in the phrase books. Soon I got so that I could tell even when Takahashi was translating literally. When he rendered a passage into the English of 1871 and belonging to our world of ideas which I suspected was not in Japanese moulds of thought I called a halt. Then I had Takahashi read me the exact, original, literal Japanese and I copied down the sentence or phrase in Roman script or, better, with the *kata kana*. I then made a literal translation for myself, with his help, of the passage before turning it into idiomatic English, thus making the version suited to our thought and acceptable, at least in verbal form, to our tastes.

After a few weeks of mutually pleasant entertainment he became for me a veritable dictionary of authors, of standard literature and of literary allusion and quotation. Though but a lad, he knew with a creditable degree of familiarity most of his country's standard authors, for he had been reared in a Samurai household, where culture as well as utility was family law.

Takahashi told me the story of the fraud practised upon him. When to the Thornrose of the Pacific our Commodore Perry played the part of the Prince who sailed out from the West and with wooing kiss woke the Princess to life and action, her young followers were as men who awakened to a new life with a hunger intensified by centuries of fasting.

The reference to the fairy tale is pat. One of the poetic names for Japan in her own vernacular is "The Princess Country."

All the lads wanted to learn the secrets of the foreigner's science and his power over material forces. In the famine of competent instructors they were, like Joseph's brethren, willing to go to a far land to buy what would satisfy their appetites.

Now, in the very early sixties the universal American conscience was but slightly troubled on the subject of slavery, whether black or brown. For centuries also it had been the orthodox European doctrine that these Asiatic peoples existed only to be conquered, despoiled and, if the white man desired or willed it, to be sold as "slaves."

"The ratcatching cat hides its claws." This is a Japanese proverb. Let us mention no names, but I knew the American of seared conscience who played the game of dropping Japanese Josephs into the pit, and by the score to sell them to the transpacific Midianites for pieces of silver. The bait was "free education in America." For some slight industry as domestic assistants in households in California would these boys of 14 or 17 years obtain in return board, clothes and schooling. Such was the promise which baited the trigger of the trap.

So Takahashi and some other lads, whom I also knew in Tokio, went on board under that supercargo of human flesh—a certain man who shall be anonymous here. Yet give him his due, as we should to the Satanic master whom in this act he was serving. He got up, so far as known, the first phrase book in Japan for the use alike of foreigners and natives, helping them to understand each other's speech. He posed as "guardian" of the Japanese lads, as "educator," as benevolent patron, and then distributed them in California and got his pay.

But in the American Potiphar's house Takahashi found that he was virtually a bond servant, with no freedom as to hours, either of service or recreation. Instead of books and teachers he was assigned only to drudgery night and day.

Laughed at His Hard Times When Working in America

Of course there were shocks of comical experiences against his preconceived notions. When he told me some of his adventures he laughed heartily, for nothing could discourage this merry lad. One of Takahashi's companions in misery and disappointment seemed to me to have become morose and anti-foreign in sentiment because of his transpacific experience, but the future Premier saw the humorous side of things and enjoyed telling of them.

For example, having been taught by the missionaries the evils of tobacco, with exhortations to taboo pipe and cigar, it was startling for these lads, out of their island hermitage and in the streets of San Francisco, to see five men out of seven with briar root pipes or cigars in their mouths.

Then, too, some things seemed dislocated, while others were grotesque. Of "John," name and man, he had heard only in reverent tones and amid the atmosphere and surroundings of a teacher's study. When, however, in San Francisco he heard a carter shout to his horse, "Get up, John!" he could hardly believe his own ears. When blows fell on the beast's back he was forced to compare Christianity with Buddhism, which inculcates kindness to animals. Henry Bergh had then hardly more than begun his work.

This Pacific coast colony of Japanese was not the only one kept in involuntary servitude. Who did not, in these mid-Victorian times, read "The Tender Recollections of Irene MacGillicuddy," by Lawrence Oliphant? It was his friend Harris who "looked for a city" which proved foundationless. In his initial scheme to regenerate the world this Harris located a colony on the shores of Lake Erie and persuaded the first party of Japanese—not from a treaty port but from their own province shores and all Samurai, or gentlemen's sons—on the same promise of "free education," to be his ploughmen and vine dressers.

One of these lads after his release from a hateful thralldom told me how fearful his fond mother was that in such a strange land as "A-may-ree-kah" he would not get enough to eat. He might even starve, for did not all foreigners look as pale as ghosts? "Do take a little rice in your trunk with you," she urged. Her dear boy Kozo found no lack of food but a surplus of hard labor.

It was the cooperation of American missionaries with the efforts of a Japanese nobleman travelling from Europe through America that secured the freedom of both sets of Japanese lads—when their hands were well calloused by unaccustomed toil. From members of both parties I heard the story of fraud and oppression which gave this early American "philanthropy" and American motives so sinister a reputation.

Takahashi was noted for his *savoir faire* even when a young student. He could sit with ministers, plenipotentiaries and secretaries at the legation banquets or in the palace. Yet ever, even when riding along the highest peaks of etiquette, he was sure footed in all the proprieties. I have seen Japanese tremble and their faces break out in perspiration when in the Emperor's presence or before men in high station and office, but I never saw Takahashi lose his poise.

All this familiarity with foreign ways and men fitted him all the more to enjoy the fun in his own country's literature, for he had a keen sense for the humors of contrast which few Japanese at that time seemed to possess. His experiences abroad had given him mental detachment, and with this came power.

I think that the book we first tackled was one by Ikku (1775-1831). It is hardly a classic among the highbrows, but probably the best English master of Japanese literature has declared it to be the cleverest literary product in the Japanese language. It is called "Tokaido Hizakurige" (literally, "Leg Hair on the Tokaido"; that is, "Shank's Mare on the Great Eastern Sea Road"). This book, like a moving picture, reproduced things surpassingly beautiful, horribly ugly, amazingly varied and quaintly enacted on that great thoroughfare which stretched from Kioto to Yedo, now Tokio.

This was the main highway of the empire and was very much like a continuous Strand or Broadway for its hundreds of miles. When feudalism fell and the railway's gridiron was laid on fair Japan the glory of the great highway became a memory. For half a century it was like a deserted country road until the automobile restored some of its former importance. In the late sixties it was still full of life, color and movement.

We must remember that until 1870 Japan was like a chess board. There were nearly three hundred feudal fiefs and castle lords in the empire. The majority of these daimios were compelled to leave their wives and children in Yedo as hostages for their good behavior when they went to spend six months of the year in their won dominion.

The coming and going of these feudal lords up and down the great road, each one striving to outdo the other in show and often in sham, with their long trains of retainers, banners and even decorated baggage covers, made this highway continually full of color and bustle.

Speaking of sham, Takahashi and I often had a good laugh over the methods which the poorer feudal lords had to use in order to pad out their required retinment or two.

Most of the year the inns were crowded with all sorts of characters and all conditions of men. One can imagine what a field was offered to an author with a keen sense of humor and a facile pen who was also a master of the different dialects and localisms of speech. Ikku's crackling pages are well spiced with incidents, anecdotes, dialect and chat. The two characters, far apart in social station, are as different as are Don Quixote and Sancho Panza on Cervantes's pages.

Here let me confess that I often suffered tortures from laughing inwardly—or trying to—when it was my duty, for politeness' sake, to keep a face as solemn as that of Daibutsu. It is not telling tales out of school to say that Takahashi, after having seen numerous things and the way they do them in America, had many a laugh at what in his country seemed too odd for dignity. Besides, we were living in the era of transition, when two civilizations clashed, when old glories and things once valued were going to the scrap heap and when former proprieties and edifices of culture were being knocked to pieces.

The old world of pomp and palace seclusion, of sham and symbol, was passing away for reality and the new world was being ushered in. As one of the "beginners of a better time," I felt that among the young men of the new generation—Ito, Okubo, Okuma and Yamagata were young men then and even the Emperor was only 18—Takahashi would in time not be the least. For "Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."

Apart from his rather unusual experiences Takahashi had that spirit of friendliness that makes friends and helps one up the ladder of fortune. I like to recall also that in those days, when only a dozen or two of foreigners of all nationalities lived in Tokio, the youthful Emperor from his carriage would greet us with a bow. The young Empress, coming to visit my sister's school—the initial one created by the Government for girls—treated the American lad more as a friend than as an alien.

Takahashi's record of 1871 is that of 1921, though with ampler opportunities—a book lover, a patriot, a man with a genius for friendship.

The old photograph on this page was given to me by Takahashi before he attained his majority. He stands by his widowed grandmother, whose shaven head betokens retirement from active social life. In this picture I read a parable of filial piety and domestic loyalty. The civilization of Japan is based on the idea of the obedience of children to parents and of the reverence of the young for the old.

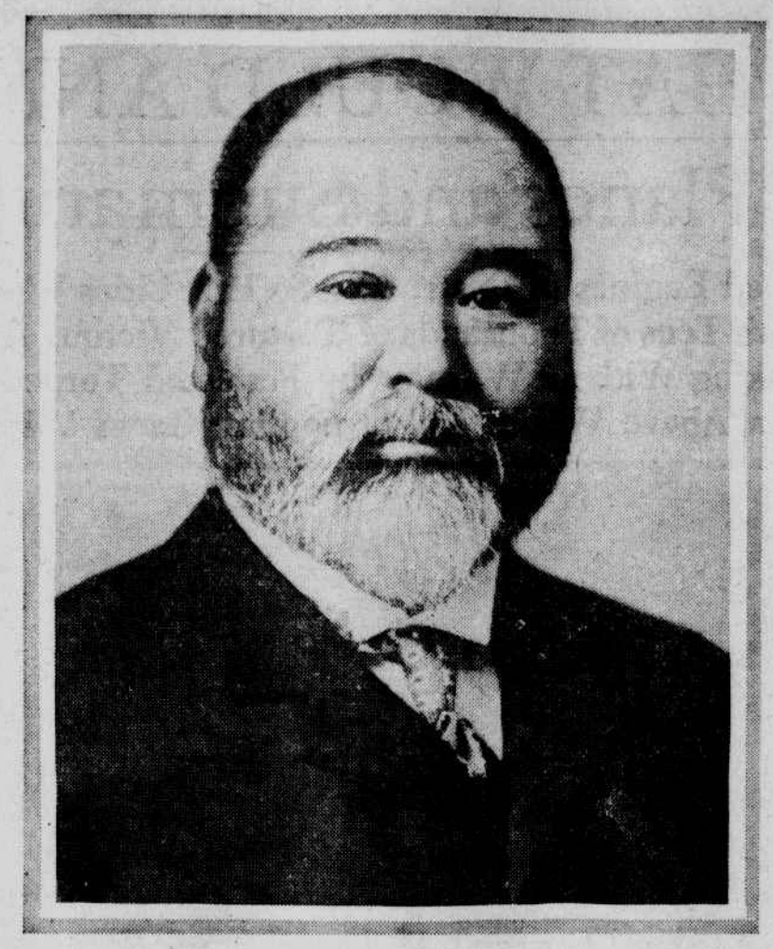
In his domestic relations the new Premier, Korikiyo Takahashi, besides a happy early childhood, has ever been fortunate. As his name indicates, he was the kiyo, or first born son, of Koretada Takahashi, a Samurai, or gentleman, of the Sendai clan. When the time came for him to take "a helpmeet for him" (as the sacred record has it, but which we have altered to the more practical "helpmate") the north and the south were wedded also. His bride was Shina, who was also the first born in her family, her father being Kinzaemon Harada, from the far south, even from Kagoshima, in Satsuma.

"The Oriental," as I have found him after a fairly long lifetime and not a little experience is as different from the one seen on the stage, in most of the movies, in yellow newspapers and as tourists picture him as a chestnut burr's externality is from the luscious meat of the nut itself. "The Oriental" of the alien's fancy is largely a literary legend existing chiefly for the sake of those who wish to make "copy," or game, of him.

One Japanese proverb matches Wordsworth's fine line "The child is father of the man;" it is this: "The sage keeps his child heart till he is sixty."

Takahashi at 65 is a sage, a superior man, an experienced statesman, a lover of good books and of hard work and a peer among great rulers. Yet, meeting him in recent years also in my own country, I find no essential difference between the lad of 1871-74 with whom I spent so many delightful hours in literary recreation and the one who, in great measure, holds in his heart and hand the destinies of a nation.

Recent portrait of Baron Takahashi, Japan's new Premier, who succeeds Premier Hara, assassinated lately.



Aristocratic English Face Poverty Now

Former Leaders of Society Have Turned to Trade and Numerous Estates Have Gone Under the Hammer

By McL. YORKE.

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THE fashionable women of England, the members of the aristocracy—the peerage—are facing a crisis. Poverty is rampant.

While society may seem, even now, to be entertaining in its usual way, the actual number of entertainers is dwindling. There is a marked absence of familiar names. Are all of these good people reeling to ruin, as the politicians would have us say? Are the titled women of England going to their doom? And without a struggle? Is there still hope? Or are they reaching the end of the rainbow?

The socially well placed may be divided, for working purposes, because they are already responding to the call, into three general groups: There are those who are going openly to work, those who are working but trying to conceal the fact, and those who cannot possibly work. These last are undeniably in the most tragic position to be imagined. This is a case, verily, of "The Lord's poor, the devil's poor and the poor devils."

But it was never anticipated that the English aristocracy should, would or could do the world's work. And when these women first drifted out of their charmed and charming inner circle it was regarded as independence—a sort of left over from the great war. It has now gradually become known that in many instances dire necessity pointed the way out into the cold, commercial world. The peerage is becoming property poor—impoverished by the enormous tax on land added to the general high cost of living and the rise in wages to all employees, servants and retainers.

It is fortunate that at this juncture mere social snobbery has not prevented the best women throughout the country from taking their share of a heavy burden; they are actually going into trade. And, strangely enough, this has a certain fascination, as had their war work. Many of the more energetic would not now, even if they could, drop back into a protected life of semi-monotony, disturbed only by social distractions.

It is in the tradition of the English nation to do well whatever it undertakes, and everything the aristocracy touch may be relied upon; already their output shrieks "durability."

The writer does not wish to imply that all of the outside interest on the part of the fashionable is traceable to poverty. Nevertheless these are not wild surmises. Not a few people of established position are put to it for actual shillings and pence for today and to-morrow. It is known that many of them are at their wits' end. And this number is increasing.

The revelation of this actual tragedy of the poor rich has come suddenly. Says somebody, it is far more complicated to deal with the rich and needy than with the poor and needy. This is true. The half-starved poor whom we have always with us demand material aid and we can give them a meal, but a bouquet of flowers is about all that her friends could appropriately offer a dying duchess.

All sorts of assistance is under way for these unfortunate gentlefolk, but much of it is as yet ineffectual because of pride. Many of the most needy are just over the age when employment is possible. It is true money is offered on security for the purpose of qualifying, but how many women of 50 and over can successfully attack a new occupation? The small advertisements have become indeed "agony columns." The demand for assistants usually includes the years between "25 to 30." The words "excellent opening occurs" have given a thrill of expectation to many who have read on only to find the vacancy is for a student—once again, *to qualify*. Where positions are wanted, "will do anything" appears so frequently as to have lost its first sting to even the sympathetic reader.

The long and continuous list of great estates and homes sold by families who have held them for generations registers a deplorable fact for the parties concerned. When a man such as Capt. W. A. Stirling-Home-Drummond-Moray, related to Lord Queensberry, parts with two more large estates after having previously sold Blair-Drummond almost as soon as it came to him the situation is not so bad because he still retains Abercairney, his home, but to a family with a single property this selling off marks the beginning of the end. It sounds the tocsin "Get to work," or, failing that, "Go to the wall."

The way to the wall is along a rough road past stringent economy, want and grim despair, and once against it the selling off of useless objects, then treasured small possessions, beginning with the proverbial Victorian paperweights and back-combs, goes on through the wardrobe to furs and jewels and ends with the cut steel Georgian earrings which bring but seven shillings. This pitiless poverty is hardest on the women of a family—when they are incompetents. They wring their hands—hands from off which they have taken their jewels one after one to surrender to a dust-licking dealer for a dole.

The "interminable visit" system is inaugurating itself, although it has, rather, been forced upon the hospitable by the guest who came for a week but stayed on for many, with no visible means of getting away, and, moreover, no place to get to. The truth leaks out—they have let their own homes, if homes they still have, in order to make up some appalling deficit. Other unfortunates have been letting away their remaining residence and moving into a cheaper one for which they plead "not responsible" when friends have sought them out.

Some time ago when Margot, *en poser*, allowed herself to dangle at the back of buses all over London town (a charmingly quaint silhouette in a bustle, as well as an excellent publisher's ad.) she created an impression of the tail end of a useless aristocracy—the break-up. But it is lingering on. These things pull themselves together sometimes. The end may have seemed more imminent than it is.

It is far more important to comprehend than to predict or pity. Bitter though this slip backward is to the English sufferer, and deplorable as it may seem to an outsider, the group most affected know themselves that they have lived superlatively. They were born into the most charming of homes, reared with the greatest care, educated in the best schools, introduced into the most engaging society since, perhaps, the Golden Age; they danced, dined, sported and chattered; they flitted from town to country; they sailed to Norway to enjoy summer and to the Riviera to evade the winter; they tripped to Sheppard's in Cairo to meet a friend at tea. But they cannot do this any more.

Are we consumed with pity? The wealthy the world over have had their innings; they realize it; but there is no evidence that they will lose out now; they are rather finding themselves.

Among a good many who have come out openly and honestly "in trade" and stand by what they are undertaking are Lady Henry Bentinck, whose hand painted furniture is on view at the Canal Workshop. Lady Henry is the daughter of the Countess of Bective. "Paul Caret" of Orchard street is directed by Lady Egerton. The Hon. Mrs. John Russell, Lord Ampthill's daughter-in-law, designs and executes frocks at a studio in Curzon street. Mrs. C. F. Leyel directs the enjoyable "Poussin" at the sign of the green wig on New Bond, where "follies" are sold—the French might call them *fantasies*—everything fascinating which you cannot get anywhere else. "Rose Bertin" was the Hon. Mrs. Petre, who is now the wife of Charles Hawtrey, the actor. Where the name reads "Ferè" on Conduit street, W., Mrs. Haines Smith, who is an American but of this group, originated the Shetland dress of lacy wool. And there are others.

It is not in the least surprising that in this decoration field women of position are a success after their long experience in handsome homes—"the stately homes of England." Designing for decorators is not new to artists particularly, but Mrs. Harrington Mann, wife of the well known artist and herself one, has just been made manager of Willets—the entire decorative establishment at Sloane Square.

Mr. Nigel Playfair of the Lyric, Hammersmith, and also of "Abraham Lincoln" and "Beggars' Opera" fame, has a word to say on women's work; they come to him by dozens and in the full confidence that they can construct stage costumes, and that without experience for the most part. He figures them there are costumes—and costumes. As for the stage itself, London actresses have always had to compete with waves of stageitis on the part of the aristocracy; it wears off, but they are subject to relapses. Usually the professional scores over them, having been born, so to say, on the boards.

The lure of limelight and "the pictures" is ever present to a curious group who fail to visualize themselves descending via water pipes and drooping over telegraph wires. There is a constant dispute whether a film face plus a title will draw against actual talent and experience, and a dispute within the other as to the personnel of a bunch of the "new newpoor" who have been reeled off recently. We know, however, that Lady Diana Manners Duff-Cooper, already editress of *Femina* magazine (and Britain clings to the opprobrious *ess*), has been counting the cinema as part of her week's work. She has her public guessing if it will make her even a more popular "Lady Di" or whether she will be a mere fade out.

To those who take the trouble to pursue them there are innumerable avenues of escape for the elect from the commonplace occupation, but, notwithstanding, a general's wife is giving massage, and an independent daughter was saved as if by a miracle from starting out as a mannequin. The talented design and make toys, paint candlesticks and lacquer trays. Russian symbols are copied in color on wooden objects by many who could not begin to interpret them. They weave, smock, make lace and cross-stitch. They deal in antiques in this field where period furniture is best understood. There is the omnipresent tea room said on occasion to yield 700 a year, meaning pounds, and a question mark might even be added to that. The Bohemian Restaurant is newer, and its checked gingham and wooden benches draw a motley crew. All, in fact, of the novel, one woman schemes tried out about ten years ago in New York have come to London.

Some of the county families have gone in for poultry and eggs, or bee keeping and honey; lavender is grown, enough to sweeten a nation.

A woman of no importance has written a book said to resemble her; an aristocrat—so signed—has told the profiteer how to behave in one volume; the dazzling idea to rush into journalism seems, simultaneously, to have affected the mind of various and sundry individuals who venture to Fleet street by bus, post or taxi as if the poor writer's job did not require either a curious native talent or a knockabout treatment from some superior, let us say.

With such a showing of resourcefulness to their credit the titled and near titled cannot be numbered among the incapables.

Some short elegies were written a while ago on the death of a prominent society woman. They proved a pathetic record of a type for which there is no longer any use.

Viper Warfare Balks Imagination

Continued from Preceding Page.

responsible for military aviation have devised an armored airplane which they believe would be virtually immune from anti-aircraft fire from the ground. In such an attack great numbers of airplanes would fly over an army, sending down a rain of bombs of this character if, for some reason, the poison gas bombs were not to be used.

The spectacular tests conducted off the Virginia capes last summer demonstrated the effectiveness of demolition bombs dropped from airplanes. In these tests nine one time German warships, one a dreadnought built shortly before the world war started, were sent to the bottom of the sea within a few minutes after the attacks began. Had these ships been in action, with their magazines filled with powder, it is unquestioned that their destruction would have been completed sooner.

The relative value of the airplane and the battleship is still being argued. It is one that will continue to be argued for some time to come. Without attempting to go into details, it is sufficient to say that the tests demonstrated beyond doubt the deadly character of aircraft attack on a fleet.

Aircraft is also being used for the launching of torpedoes against vessels of the fleets. The navy has been conducting experiments for a long time with torpedoes, firing them much as they were fired from surface craft. An airplane swoops down close to the water and lets go the torpedo. It automatically continues in line in the direction fired. The advantage is that the airplane does not have to get near the ship that is the target. The torpedo is let go and the airplane is off again in the air.

Lack of funds and the infancy of the development, however, have prevented the United States from building up any great stock of such materials. Most of the chemical warfare work is going on at the Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland, on a large tract next to the Aberdeen proving grounds. The chemicals are tested there, the demolition bombs, the incendiary bombs and the fragmentation or troop bombs. They are made at various stations.

There always has been much question about the submarine, not only of its value as a weapon, but the fairness in its use. The ruthless campaign of the Germans when they sent to the bottom of the sea passenger vessels carrying women and children, as in the case of the Lusitania, set the world aghast.

Everywhere the people condemned this weapon as one that strikes from under cover, as one that fears to come into the open to fight. It is an invitation at all times, as in the case of Germany, to sink passenger and other merchant vessels without the customary and well established right of visit and search.

The very character of the submarine further makes it impossible to take off the passengers and crew of such a ship before it is sunk. Often these persons, if the commander of the submarine is even that fair, are set adrift on the high seas in open boats, to be picked up by the next passing ship or to die. The horrors of this character of warfare are fresh in the public mind. Four years ago the newspapers were full of stories of submarines; those who closely follow public opinion cannot feel now that this feeling has abated.

Naval experts are at work now on a torpedo which will direct itself. Torpedoes already are self stabilizing and self propelled. But they travel in the direction in which they are aimed. What the experts are working on now is a torpedo which when fired will be attracted by the iron and steel work on a ship so that the torpedo will be drawn to it as if it were a magnet. If this development is perfected it will make submarines all the more deadly.

Greenland Journalism

ACCORDING to the captain of a British bark, journalism in Greenland is in rather a primitive stage. The captain makes frequent voyages to Greenland and is held to be an authority on conditions in that country. The one editor in Greenland is a Dane of the name of Moeller, who conducts the only newspaper and enjoys the singular distinction of printing the paper for the natives and teaching them to read it.

Mr. Moeller is not only the editor and proprietor; he is the reporter, printer, distributer and business manager, and every two weeks he performs a long journey on skates to dispose of his journal. Originally it contained only a few crude illustrations, but gradually other matter was introduced, until now it contains articles on the affairs of the day. This man actually taught his subscribers to read his paper, first introducing words, then sentences, and now articles on the topics of the time.